



I would like to reassure every citizen and resident of the UAE that our country, God willing, is infinitely able to supply everyone with all food and medicine they could ever need.

Medications and food supplies are “a red line in the UAE”.

and with God's help, we are well prepared to face any challenges that may arise.



His Highness Sheikh

Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan,

Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme
Commander of the UAE Armed Forces

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Chairperson's Statement

The world is currently experiencing unprecedented circumstances with consequences reflected in all aspects of our social, economic, civil and political life because of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has infected nearly 33 million people and claimed more than 1 million lives worldwide thus far.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the United Arab Emirates has pledged to prioritize the public's well-being. It has taken various measures to protect society from the spread of the virus and has taken the initiative to ease daily life for citi-

zens and residents, as seen through the adoption of a number of national policies, strategies, and plans to combat the pandemic, including on the health, education and food security fronts.

The UAE has enacted national legislation and regulations that have contributed significantly to containing the pandemic. In its efforts and preventive measures to combat COVID-19, the UAE Government has also been guided by technical recommendations issued by various international organizations and specialized agencies, in addition

to United Nations human rights bodies, mechanisms and committees, which have worked with countries in the fight against the pandemic. This approach has had a positive impact on the human rights agenda at the national level.

Since the onset of the pandemic, the UAE was quick to demonstrate solidarity with other countries and peoples around the world, sparing no effort to provide all forms of support and assistance to those affected

by the pandemic. The UAE has sent more than 1,471 tons of aid to more than 118 countries, benefiting more than 1.5 million health workers in these countries. The UAE has also been keen to enhance its bilateral and multilateral partnerships and cooperation in the fight against the pandemic.

Today, the world is in urgent need of unified international efforts to overcome the pandemic, and the UAE will continue supporting all efforts to achieve this goal.

Dr. Anwar Mohammed Gargash

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

Chairperson of the National Human Rights Committee

Introduction:

Since the beginning of the global outbreak, the UAE Government has prioritized public health and safety by launching a broad package of legislation, policies, resolutions, and precautionary and preventative measures, which in turn have contributed significantly to reducing the negative impact of this pandemic.

All governmental efforts come in furtherance of its vision to prepare for the post - COVID - 19 phase, which aim to protect the national gains achieved by the UAE at all levels. This is in accordance with promoting governmental readiness and developing its institutions to enhance their capabilities to turn challenges into opportunities.

Methodology of Report Preparation:

The National Human Rights Committee, established by a Cabinet Resolution in October 2019 and including representatives of a number of governmental institutions, has prepared the current report entitled "Promoting and protecting human rights in the context of national efforts to combat the COVID - 19 pandemic."

The report highlights prominent efforts made by federal and local UAE Government entities, civil society institutions, and the private sector since the outbreak of the covid - 19 pandemic until september 2020. The report also notes important national plans, policies, and strategies adopted by the government in this context, which have contributed significantly to promoting and protecting human rights, including through health and education and protecting the rights of women, children, the elderly, and people of determination. This also includes protecting employees and inmates' rights in punitive institutions.

The actions taken by the government to contain COVID - 19 have aligned with the guidelines and recommendations of specialized international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO); UN human rights bodies, mechanisms and committees, represented by the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights; treaty bodies, and the special procedures system. This also includes guidelines issued by regional human rights bodies and mechanisms represented by the Arab League.

The UAE has shared experiences, best practices, and knowledge with other countries to fight the pandemic. This stems from the UAE's core belief in the need to intensify international cooperation in combating COVID - 19.

Standard and Institutional Framework for Combating the COVID - 19 Pandemic:

National Laws, Legislation and Regulations:

The UAE Government has issued a series of laws, regulations, and resolutions as part of the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, the most important of which include:

1. Federal Law No. (3) of 2020 concerning the Regulation of the Strategic Stock of Food Commodities, which aims to regulate the strategic stock of food in UAE.
2. Cabinet Resolution issued in April 2020 concerning the Publication and Exchange of Information on Communicable Diseases and Epidemics and health misinformation, which aims to maintain the health and safety of the community.
3. Attorney General's decision No. (39) Of 2020 amending Resolution No. (38) of 2020 on implementing the Regulation for Controlling Administrative Violations and Penalties issued by Cabinet Resolution No (17) of 2020, which sets out regulations for violating the measures issued by the Ministry of Health and Community Protection and the regulations of not taking the necessary measures.
4. Head of Federal Supreme Council decision no. (4) of 2020 on the regulations of Organizing the Work Of Courts and the Consideration of Hearings and Executive Cases under Emergency Circumstances.
5. Decision No. 5 of 2020 on the continuity controls of the work of courts, federal prosecutors, and judicial services using electronic means and remote communication.
6. Ministerial Resolution No. (279) of 2020 on the stability of employment in private sector enterprises during the period of implementing precautionary measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19, in addition to the temporary manual issued by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization.
7. A temporary guide on working remotely for private sector facilities, which includes the necessary actions to be taken during urgent situations.
8. Ministerial Resolution No. (281) of 2020 concerning the regulation of remote work in private sector establishments during the period of precautionary measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19, issued by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization.
9. Manual of implementing remote work at the federal government level and Emergency Procedure Guidelines, issued by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization in March 2020.
10. A guide to readiness and business continuity for private sector entities registered at the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization.

National Authorities, Bodies, and Mechanisms:

► The National Emergency Crisis and Disaster Management Authority (NCEMA)

NCEMA works under the umbrella and supervision of the National Supreme Security Council and aims to undertake the necessary procedures for managing crises, catastrophes, and emergencies. NCEMA is the key national organization responsible for coordinating, developing, and standardizing laws, policies and procedures for managing and controlling crises, catastrophes and emergencies at the national level. It has played a key and active role in developing the national and international response to COVID - 19.

► The Federal Authority for Identity and Nationality (ICA):

The Authority plays a prominent role in managing the current crisis by taking decisions to mitigate the pandemic's effects among UAE citizens, visitors, and residents, particularly in light of the near total closure of air traffic.

Since the beginning of the outbreak of Covid-19, the government has issued permits for the return of residents who are abroad. In addition, the UAE has extended an amnesty period waiving the fines of violators of entry and residency law and whose visas expired before March 1, and are granted amnesty during the period announced by the Federal Authority for Identity and Nationality.

In addition, the procedures of lifting restrictions between countries are continuously updated, which contributes the

return of their citizens.

► The Supreme National Committee for Volunteerism in Crises

On April 7, 2020, the UAE Cabinet approved the formation of the Supreme National Committee for Volunteerism in Crises to be chaired by H.H. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. The committee includes representatives from relevant authorities and aims to develop an integrated and sustainable system of volunteering in the UAE during crises in cooperation with the concerned individuals and institutions.

► The Abu Dhabi Emergency, Crisis and Disaster Committee for the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Committee aims to enhance the effectiveness of the expanded National Screening Program as part of a series of precautionary and preventative measures to curb the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health and safety of all community members.

► The Supreme Committee of Crisis and Disaster Management in Dubai

This entity conducts an ongoing review of preventive measures in Dubai to counter COVID-19.

► The Committee for the Return of Residents from Abroad

The body facilitates the return of foreign

residents currently abroad whose earlier return was prevented due to the suspension of travel.

► The Ministry of Interior's Internal and External Service Availability Committee

The Committee contributes to developing health policies, programs, and preventive plans for all employees in service centers of departments of punitive and correc-

tional institutions at the national level.

► The Emirates Council for Food Security:

Launched by the Cabinet in January 2020, it is a central platform for the management of the UAE's food file. The scope of the Council's work includes suggesting regulations, legislation, and policies related to food security, monitoring the implementation of the National Food Security Strategy, and strengthening strategic food stockpiles.

National Policies, Strategies and Plans:

The UAE Government has adopted a series of national policies, strategies, and plans to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic:

► National Disinfection Program:

The UAE Government, represented by the Ministry of Health & Prevention (MoHAP) and Ministry of Interior (MoI) announced the launch of the National Disinfection

Program in coordination with the relevant institutions at the national level and individual emirates. The program conducted a complete sterilization of all public facilities, streets, public transport facilities, and metro service.



► Distance Learning in the Age of COVID-19

On March 22, 2020, the Ministry of Education began applying distance learning in UAE public and private schools, as well as higher education institutions.

► Launching Smart Service System

Launched by the Ministry of Interior through its electronic services portal, the system offers services for the Ministry's employees and the public, such as traffic and licensing services without the need to visit service centers. It also includes the "Hassantuk" service to apply for fire safety systems for homes.

► National Home Testing Program for People of Determination (Special Needs)

Home inspections are carried out in cooperation with the National Ambulance for People of Determination among citizens and residents who are unable to easily access screening centers.

Hayat (Life) Program for Mental Health Support: The Employee Assistance Pro-

gram or Hayat (Arabic word for life) is a psychological and moral support program to help federal government employees manage mental health challenges associated with COVID-19.

► Youth Guide to Care for Senior Emiratis and Protect Them from Pandemics

The Federal Youth Authority launched a set of guidelines entitled "Youth Guide to Care for Senior Emiratis and Protect Them from Pandemics" in cooperation with the Ministry of Community Development.

These guidelines aim to increase youth awareness of how to care for senior citizens and provides preventative measures against COVID-19, with a particular emphasis on those suffering from chronic diseases and lower immunity.

► The UAE's Post-COVID-19 Strategy

It aims to develop the government's system of work by developing action plans, policies, and effective mechanisms, covering six key sectors: health, education, economy, food security, society, and government.

Promoting and Protecting Human Rights in the Context of National Efforts to Combat the COVID-19 Pandemic:

Regional and International References to Combat the COVID-19 Pandemic

As part of its efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, the UAE Government has closely followed recommendations and guidance issued by specialized international organizations and United Nations human rights agencies, mechanisms, and committees. The technical recommendations and directives include economic, cultural, social, civil and political rights of individuals and groups.

- 1- UNSG policy brief on the COVID-19 pandemic and human rights titled "We are all in this together" in April 2020
- 2- World Health Organization technical recommendations, guidelines, and periodic updates issued on the fight against COVID-19
- 3- Technical recommendations, guidelines, and directives on food safety issued by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization on April 7, 2020
- 4- International Labor Organization (ILO) recommendations on protecting migrant workers in light of COVID-19 in April 2020
- 5- Guidance and recommendations on emergency measures to combat COVID-19 issued by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on April 27, 2020
- 6- Directives and recommendations on the protection of economic, social, cultural, civil, and political rights during the fight against COVID-19 issued by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on May 13, 2020
- 7- Recommendations of the Chairman of the Arab Human Rights Commission (Charter Committee) on the response to the COVID-19 outbreak in May 2020

Human Rights Protections at the National Level:

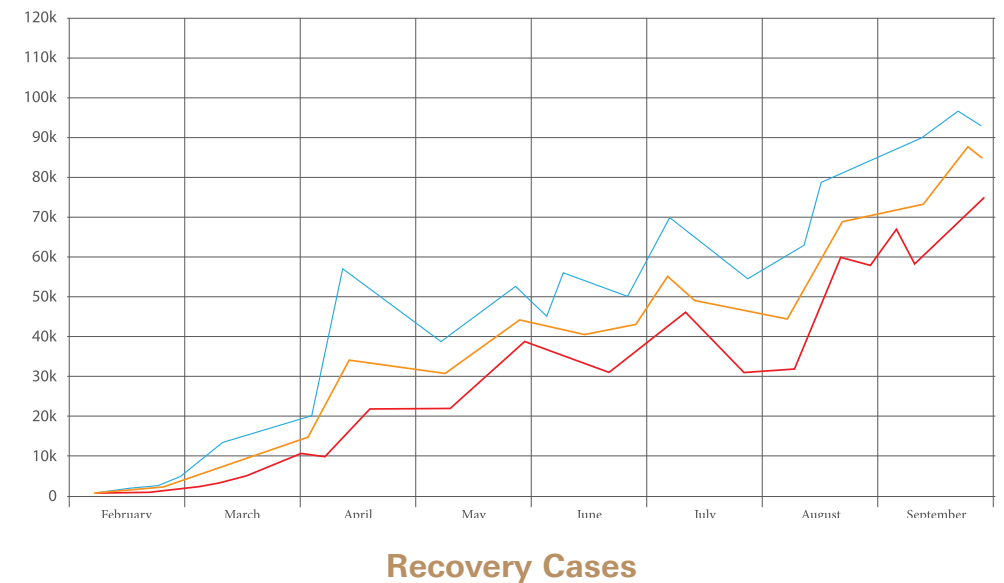
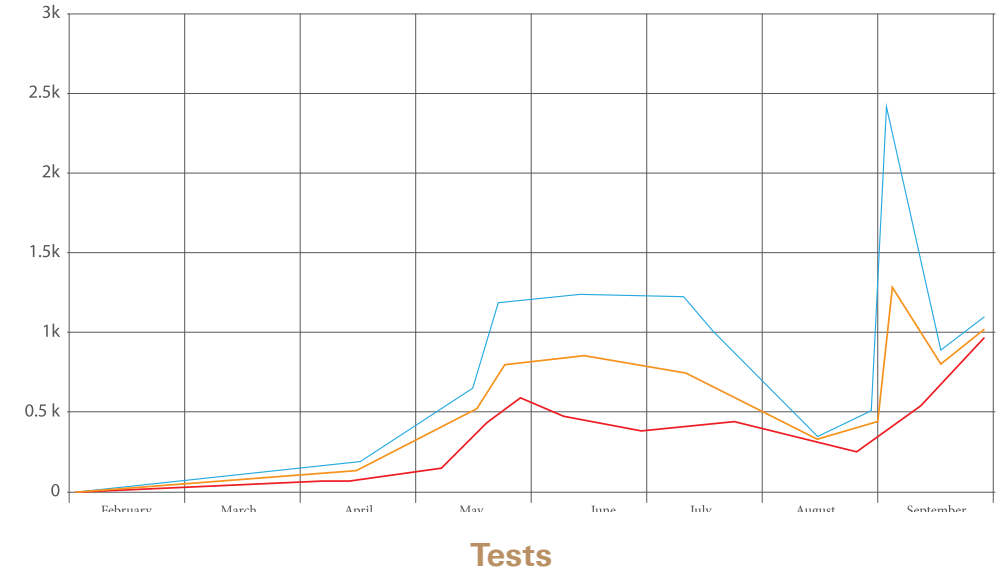
Policies crafted by the UAE in the fight against COVID-19 have come in line with recommendations by the aforementioned regional and international organizations. These actions have had a positive impact on human rights work at the national level:

► Promoting the Right to Health:

In its updated COVID-19 strategy of April 14, 2020, WHO stressed that governments must empower individuals and communities through communication, education, participation, capacity building, and support. Furthermore, governments should work with the public, private, and community sectors in expanding the public health system to detect, test, and isolate confirmed cases (both at home or in any medical facility), identify, trace, and quar-

antine contacts, and provide support for them.

At the same time, governments should equip the health system to treat COVID-19 infected patients effectively while maintaining the provision of other essential health and social services for all. Governments may be forced to implement general measures of physical isolation, social distancing, and restrictions on movement commensurate with the health risks faced by society.



Source: Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority

Date: 20 / 09 / 2020

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights also stressed in its COVID-19 guidelines that treatment must be provided to all without discrimination and that no one—particularly the most vulnerable—should be denied treatment in a timely manner because they could not afford it.

In this context, the measures taken by the UAE have kept pace with the above-mentioned guidelines, wherein the UAE has prioritized the public's right to health-care access. For example, the Ministry of Health and Prevention (MOHAP) has issued numerous guidance publications and awareness materials on COVID-19. These publications were prepared based on the best international practices adopted in various languages, including Arabic, Urdu, Chinese, English, and Persian. These publications included information on community health resources,

methods of COVID-19 transmission and prevention, tips for travelers, and guidelines for schools, companies, and other institutions. The material also covered regulations in other facilities such as transportation, sports activities, commercial centers, entertainment venues, parks, gatherings, workplaces, offices, labor accommodations, and places of worship, as well as guidelines for social visits and holidays. This material was disseminated through audio-visual and mass media.

The UAE has used smart solutions to detect, trace and control the spread of COVID-19. One of the most prominent of these smart solutions is the AI Hosh application for all community members. The Ministry of Health and Prevention launched a national campaign to encourage all citizens and residents to use the app, which aims to provide rapid access to the results of COVID-19 testing and



perform contact tracing with infected cases. The application takes into account the importance of user privacy while promoting public health and safety.

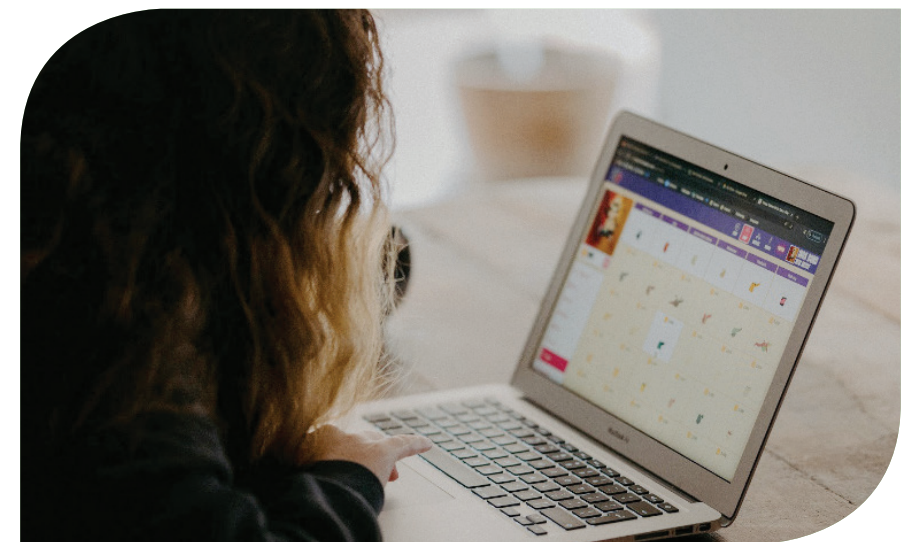
The UAE has provided access to testing, medication, and treatment to all people living in UAE, nationals and residents, without discrimination. The total number of COVID-19 confirmed cases in UAE has reached 84,916 persons so far. The number of COVID-19 cases is expected due to the country's high level of testing and contact tracing, as the UAE has performed over 8 million tests to date. The UAE has also established 14 drive-through testing and screening centers in various emirates, staffed by qualified and trained technical and medical personnel. Moreover, it also introduced a home testing program to give priority to the elderly, pregnant women, and those with special needs. The National Committee for Management

of COVID-19 Cases and the Technical Team for Pandemic Control have adopted eight treatment protocols for coronavirus patients in the UAE based on the recommendations of medical institutions and specialized organizations.

► Right to Education:

Education in the UAE is a national priority, and the UAE has ensured that the pandemic would not compromise students' development while taking into account their health and safety, as well as that of the administrative staff. To ensure the continuity of education, the UAE has adopted the following measures:

The Ministry of Education and educational stakeholders in the UAE implemented distance learning early in the pandemic in accordance with approved study plans. The Ministry also offered special-



ized training for more than 32,000 educational staff in public and private schools, in addition to establishing approximately 1,500 virtual electronic communities for employees of the Ministry and government and private schools classified by specialization and educational level to facilitate communication between specialists. The Ministry of Education and its stakeholders have also launched the following initiatives to ensure educational continuity:

- 1- The Ministries of Education, and Health and Prevention held joint briefings to inform staff, students, and parents of the pandemic's impact on the educational system. These briefings came in addition to various publications and video materials to raise community awareness.
- 2- The Ministry of Education announced earlier spring holidays, the suspension of kindergarten, the sterilization of schools and their facilities, and postponement of standardized testing periods as part of efforts to encourage social and physical distancing.
- 3- The Ministry activated the remote learning system for approximately 1.2 million students across 20 platforms. Curricula, school plans, and platforms have been integrated with advanced simulation programs to ensure the high quality of lessons.
- 4- Policies were developed to ensure the provision of a regulatory environment

supporting smart learning by implementing Student Behavior Management Regulations for Smart Learning and introducing an examination policy across smart learning platforms.

- 5- Students and educational staff in public and private schools received training on educational platforms to ensure their optimal use and manage the transition to smart learning efficiently and professionally.
- 6- The Ministry has developed dozens of distance activities and competition programs for students to encourage use of the smart learning system. It has also launched various initiatives to facilitate communication with parents and offer specialized training programs for their benefit. Community support programs targeting the children of educational, medical, and nursing professionals were also developed, in addition to those created to support families in need.
- 7- The Ministry of Community Development has ensured the continuity of education for people of determination enrolled in rehabilitation centers through distance learning and smart applications for all government and private centers and early intervention centers. The Ministry also provided guidelines on home schooling to account for the differing needs of people of determination in light of the pandemic.

General Statistics



► Food Provision and Safety

The World Health Organization, and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) have identified general procedures that governments and individuals must follow in the fight against COVID-19. The most importance of these guidelines is the need to ensure food security, with governments guaranteeing access to food for all by adopting strong food security practices, maintaining a food supply, and offering access to nutritious food. The World Health Organization has also issued general guidance on shopping in markets and purchasing food in terms of washing

hands with soap and thoroughly sanitizing vegetables and fruits.

The UAE recognizes that the right to food is a priority. Therefore, in November 2018, the UAE launched the National Food Security Strategy 2051, which aims to develop a comprehensive national system enabling sustainable food production using modern technologies and identifying key elements of the national food stockpile. The strategy includes 38 major short and long-term initiatives within the 2051 Vision and 2021 Agenda and operates according to five strategic pillars focused on facilitating the global food

trade, diversifying food import resources, and identifying alternative supply plans.

In January 2020, the UAE established the Emirates Council for Food Security (ECFS). The Council's first decision was to announce an increase in the UAE's stock of strategic commodities. One of the most important measures taken by the UAE is the issuance of Federal Law No. (3) Of 2020 on the regulation of the UAE's strategic food stocks in times of crises, emergencies, and disasters with the aim of achieving food sustainability. This law is not limited to combating COVID-19 and covers future crises that may affect the provision of food for UAE citizens and residents.

The Ministry of Economy has stressed that markets in the UAE are in good condition in terms of the availability and diversity of goods, primarily basic, food, and medical commodities. The Ministry has explained that the import of goods and commodities

in the country is carried out as required to meet market requirements and customers' needs in different emirates of the country. The Ministry has also been keen to monitor and control the prices of food commodities and sterilization supplies and punish price manipulators.

In May 2020, in cooperation with the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN), the Abu Dhabi Agriculture and Food Safety Authority (ADAFSA) has issued a guidance document to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the food businesses sector. The document aims to raise awareness among food businesses, food workers, and consumers about ways to prevent the risk of exposure to COVID-19 and strengthen existing food hygiene and safe handling practices in food facilities.

► Freedom of Movement & Mobility and the Return of Residents from Abroad

The Office of the United Nations High



Food Provision and Safety

Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has indicated in its COVID-19 guidance on emergency measures that some rights, such as freedom of movement, freedom of expression, or freedom of peaceful assembly, may be subject to restrictions for public health reasons, even in the absence of a state of emergency. These restrictions, however, must meet the following requirements:

Legality: The restriction must be "provided by law." This means that the limitation must be contained in a national law of general application, which is in force at the time the limitation is applied. The law must not be arbitrary or unreasonable, and it must be clear and accessible to the public.

Necessity: The restriction must be necessary for the protection of one of the permissible grounds stated in the ICCPR, which include public health, and must respond to a pressing social need.

Proportionality: The restriction must be proportionate to the interest at stake, i.e. it must be appropriate to achieve its protective function, and it must be the least intrusive option among those that might achieve the desired result.

Non-discrimination: No restriction shall discriminate contrary to the provisions of international human rights law. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights also stressed the need for governments to inform affected populations of the meaning, scope, and extent of emergency measures and to update this information regularly, make it available to all as widely as possible, and ensure that governments return to normalcy as soon as possible.

In this context, the UAE has ensured,

since the beginning of the outbreak, not to curtail the right of individuals and to guarantee their freedom of movement and mobility, restricting them only to the absolute necessity while accounting for public health and safety. The UAE has not issued any emergency laws, and all orders concerning the total or partial ban were issued by decisions of the relevant committees responsible for managing the COVID-19 crisis. All decisions were precautionary and preventive in nature to reduce the spread of the virus and apply social distancing against the backdrop of the National Disinfection Program. These measures were proportionate and linked to a specific scope and period of application. The UAE also resorted to a total lockdown in only 1 case and for two weeks in Dubai, after which daily life returned to normal. In Abu Dhabi, a five-week ban on entry and exit was issued, with permits granted for some exceptional cases. This decision had a significant impact on reducing the number of COVID-19 cases.

The adept UAE authorities, represented by the crisis management committees and Ministry of Interior, have regularly informed the public of the latest developments related to movement and mobility through social media, text messages, video and audio news channels, and applications provided by the Ministry of Interior.

The UAE has also allowed the departure of those wishing to return to their home countries at their request. The departure process was carried out in coordination with foreign embassies accredited to the UAE, which in turn praised the UAE's efforts in this regard. The UAE has also allowed the return of those wishing to return to the country according to health and safety criteria.

► The Right of Access to Justice:

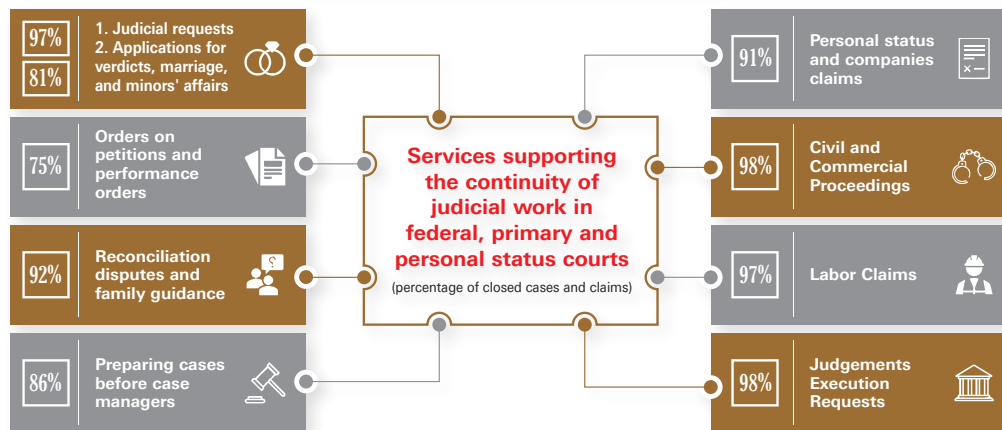
The UAE activated the use of remote videoconferencing technology in civil proceedings even prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The UAE issued Federal Law No. (5) of 2017 regarding the use of video conferencing for legal and criminal proceedings, which allows the competent authorities to conduct proceedings by video among the accused, victims, witnesses, lawyers, experts, translators, civil rights claimants, and civil rights officials. The UAE also issued UAE Federal Law No. (10) Of 2017 amending some provisions of the Civil Procedures Law. The law adds a new chapter to the Civil Procedures Law, entitled the "Usage of remote communications in civil proceedings." This authorizes and outlines the use of video conferencing in civil procedures. The new chapter (6) also defines 'remote communication technologies' as tools that ena-

ble visual and audible communications between two or more parties at a distance for uses including the exchange of images and documents such as the registration of a lawsuit and legal notices procedures, trials, and the execution of a rendered judgment.

The COVID-19 pandemic has not prevented the convening of legal proceedings in the UAE. The federal courts and prosecutors, with all different levels of primary, appellate and legality, conciliation and reconciliation centers, family guidance committees, and litigation management offices, have begun their work using electronic means and remote videoconferencing technology.

The Abu Dhabi Judicial Department has announced the availability of 100% remote trials to litigants, in addition to the notary's transactions, documentation, family guidance, and judicial enforcement hearings, and has activated remote litigation

Continuity of judicial work in federal courts amidst the COVID-19 pandemic from June 14, 2020 to June 18, 2020



using the visual communication system to cover all civil services, personal status, rents, legacies, and urgent cases, as well as the preparatory services of cases. Dubai courts have also resumed hearing cases remotely in various types of courts and at all levels (Court of First Instance, Court of Appeal and Court of Cassation) and the same has applied in the courts of Ras Al Khaimah.

► Protection of the Family, Especially Women and Children

Women play a leading role in the first line of defense in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, and they are an integral part of a common national system of action in which everyone works together to contain this crisis. National authorities, institutions, and mechanisms in the UAE play a major role in supporting women through the following:

The General Women's Union has launched the Women's Health Initiative "Be Safe Bridge" to enhance the physical and psychological health of women as part of efforts to build women's capacities to cope with the crisis.

The initiative focuses on three pillars: Supporting the physical and psychological health of women, Promoting successful management of daily life, and Encouraging health and safety at home. These pillars will be activated through capacity-building programs for optimal use of time and promotion of safety guidelines at home, in addition to the use of specialists raising awareness and providing health and psychological counseling across social media platforms. This initiative comprises 24 video posts and publications and 4 dialogue sessions.

The UAE prioritized the early protection of women by launching remote work for pregnant women and mothers with children in the 9th grade and younger as early precautions to curb the spread of COVID-19.

The UAE has also given child protection the utmost importance, wherein, The Fatima Bint Mubarak Volunteering Program, in collaboration with the General Women's Union, launched the Mobile and Child Health Clinic for Telemedicine as the first mobile clinic in the region concerned with women and children's health. The specialist clinic for women and children includes units for clinical examination, a unit for the laboratory diagnosis of glucose and fat, kidney and liver diseases, a cardiac ultrasound examination unit. In addition, a cardiac exertion examination, and an education and awareness unit that provides specialized remote services for those suspected of having COVID-19, as well as those in isolation and confinement, especially those with chronic diseases.

The UAE's Supreme Council for Motherhood and Children has provided support and assistance to children and parents during the COVID-19 crisis. The Council worked to educate children and their caregivers on laws regarding the protection of children, provide advice and guidance through the dissemination of video publications and live dialogue meetings broadcasts on social media, and involve members of the UAE Children's Parliament to address health issues and exchange ideas>

The Ministry of Community Development has launched a number of remote online awareness workshops on children's rights. The workshops targeted educational experts, social and psychological specialists, and administrative supervisors in Sharjah Private Education Author-

ity, as well as parents of students to focus on awareness and educational initiatives about Wadeema's Law.

Dubai's Community Development Authority (CDA) announced a unified hotline to provide community members with a 24-hour channel to report cases of abuse, neglect, and violence against children. The hotline ensures immediate follow-up of cases with clear procedures and reporting of abuse and ensures the confidentiality of the person's personal information.

► Protection of Employment and Workers' Rights

- The International Labor Organization issued basic provisions on the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, which included necessary responses related to job losses, wages, occupational safety, and the health of workers, worker rights and obligations, and the prevention of discrimination against workers.
- The UAE, represented by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization, in cooperation with the country's crisis management committees, has given the highest priority to the protection of workers' rights, as well as their safety and security. These policies continue to ensure providing workers with a decent living and work environment that protects them in light of the pandemic and in accordance with international standards. They include:
- The Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization has taken precautionary and preventive measures to protect employment in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ministry of Human

Resources and Emiratization has reduced the attendance of workers in private sector establishments to the minimum necessary for the conduct of business. This is so that the percentage of workers whose work requires them to be present in the workplace does not exceed 30% of the total number of employees in a single establishment, in parallel with the application of the remote work system for workers whose job duties do not require presence in the workplace. MoHRE stressed further reducing the number of employees who are physically required at service delivery centers by no more than 30%. In addition, it stressed the importance of applying preventive health measures that include social distancing and the regular sanitization of all facilities. This excludes activities related to infrastructure projects such as supply, telecommunications, energy, health, education, and banking, the manufacturing of sanitary supplies, and cleaning companies.

- Private entities must provide screening at their entrances to take the temperature of workers twice daily. Before entry in the morning and upon return for evening shifts. Suspected cases must be prohibited from going to work or entering their accommodations before referring them to the relevant health authorities to take the necessary measures.
- Businesses must adhere to guidelines issued by the competent authorities concerning the delivery of goods and services. The decision calls upon these entities to put in place a mechanism for transporting workers to and from their workplaces. Entities must guarantee that the number of transported workers should not exceed 25 percent of vehicle

Administrative support packages



Raising all restrictions on all establishments registered with the Ministry

to allow them to receive new internal work permits and be able to renew work permits for employees registered under targeted establishments



Allowing enterprises to recover the bank guarantee as soon as the work permit is renewed and worker insured with an exemption from the waiting period associated with the Wage Protection System (WPS)

as well as obtaining new work permits despite the existence of previous expired work permits that require a settlement by paying fines

Allowing establishments to renew work permits without requiring them to renew expired permits for more than 6 months

Extending work permits for 3 months directly without imposing fees, renewing work permits automatically with exemption from routine medical examination, as well as allowing the establishment to issue new internal work permits on third-level occupations without requiring them to provide conditional educational certificates



Granting workers leave without pay

upon agreement between the employer and the worker.



Suspending the implementation of Article 14

on establishments that maintain a certain number of UAE nationals among their staff



Permitting the temporary modification of employment contracts

by mutual consent

Financial support packages



Cancelling transaction fees

(establishment card, electronic signature card, PMO card, work permit fees for the domestic service workers category)



Reducing fees on establishments

by 70%-25% so that establishments can continue to pay their workers dues



Bank Guarantees

Returning 50% of bank guarantees collected by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization and replacing them with insurance documents



Reducing work permit fees

by 75% for establishments that have 6-1 workers, representing 65% of the total number of establishments registered with the Ministry.

Government Services

Extending the validity of expired government services for a renewable period of three months.



Distribute leaflets and awareness posters

The Guidance Department at the UAE Ministry of Human Resources & Emiratization MoHRE coordinated with Tawjeeh / Guidance Centers to distribute more than 10,000 leaflets and awareness posters in labor complexes nationwide.



Sending awareness messages to employers

to inform them of the procedures to be followed regarding the continuity of the working relationship between them and the workers through the implementation of the articles contained in Ministerial Resolution 279 of 2020. 689,994 awareness messages were sent to 300,000 users of the MoHRE application.



Receive Complaints

Offering the Ministry's 24/7 free call center in 13 several different languages in order to receive complaints and answer any legal questions requested by workers. This was conducted to emphasize the need to use legal procedures and methods to file labor complaints without resorting to any negative procedures such as work suspensions or labor strikes.



Delivering MOHRE's application

which has been downloaded by more than 300,000 users to offer guidance, highlight mechanisms for submitting claims and labor complaints, and discourage illegal measures harmful to the community.



Free SIM card

Through MOHRE Tawjeeh/Guidance Centers, each worker is granted a free SIM card. Approximately 300,000 cards have been distributed in cooperation with Du Telecommunications Company. These cards are also distributed through mobile units of workers in labor housing in different parts of the country and currently 60% of these workers can be contacted directly, so that text messages are sent to alert the necessary precautions.



seating capacity while ensuring a safe distance between workers.

- Employers should also ban gatherings and the convening of cultural, social, and sporting activities in worker accommodations while minimizing the number of workers at canteens during mealtimes and maintaining at least a two-meter space between every two workers.
- The decision requires private establishments to report any worker with coronavirus symptoms or any suspected cases while following relevant authorities' instructions concerning those involved in the delivery of goods and services to customers.
- The decision also stressed that all private establishments should harness the power of technology, including smart digital platforms with online support capabilities.
- Broadcast various awareness messages addressed to workers in their native languages aimed at informing them of all precautions, preventive measures and information on the disease as well as how to deal with the initial symptoms if they arise.
- The labor inspection sector has intensified its engagement with businesses in the most affected sectors and is ensuring compliance with ministerial regulations on the contractual relationship between employers and workers during this critical phase.
- In terms of providing medical examinations, medication, and awareness campaigns on ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19 for workers, the Ministry of Health and Prevention conducted field

surveys of industrial areas and worker housing with the aim of early detection and timely treatment, in addition to executing awareness and education programs in various languages. The Ministry has also expanded the delivery of medicines to homes.

- The UAE launched the "Be Well" awareness campaign, an initiative to promote the health and safety of workers amid the coronavirus pandemic. The campaign collects donations to help provide a box for each worker, containing essential prevention and protection items for their health, safety, and social support. The box also includes a mobile phone credit for voice and data and a new SIM card to allow workers to remain in touch with their families overseas. The campaign, which has benefited 26,000 workers, is in partnership with the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization, the UAE Red Crescent Authority, and supported by Faza'a and Emirates Integrated Telecommunications Company (du).
- In terms of promoting the right to work and support programs provided to the private sector, The Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization (MoHRE) launched a national program to support the stability of the labor market in the private sector. The program was launched to ensure the continuity of business in light of a series of preventive and precautionary measures taken at the national level to counter COVID-19. The national program focuses on three key topics: supporting enterprises in the labor market, supporting employment in private sector enterprises, and supporting citizens working for private sector enterprises.

► **Protection of the Elderly and Persons with Special Needs (People of Determination)**

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and international human rights mechanisms related to the rights of persons with special needs (people of determination) have stressed that national responses should include targeted measures to address the challenges faced by this group and that no actions or measures should discriminate against persons with special needs. With regards to the support of the elderly, the United Nations stressed in its policy summary in May 2020 that all social, economic, and humanitarian measures must take into account the needs of the elderly in terms of universal health coverage, social protection, decent work, and pensions.

Prior to the pandemic, the UAE already managed to provide care, empowerment, and inclusion of people of determination by through their full rights of education, employment, housing, and transportation, in addition to the highest level of services. This comes in recognition of their essential role in the country's development and social advancement.

As part of precautionary and preventive efforts to promote their health and safety, the UAE launched the National Home Inspection Program for citizens and residents. This program targets those who are unable to access screening centers easily, especially those who face challenges in mobility or communication. The UAE has tested approximately more than 3000 of people of determination of both citizens and residents.

The Ministry of Community Development (MOCD) has prepared a response

policy to empower people of determination in emergencies, crises, and disasters in order to ensure the continued provision of rehabilitation, educational, and health services without discrimination and when needed. The Ministry has produced a series of videos and awareness posters for people of determination in accessible formats, including those translated in sign language for the deaf and illustrated for people with intellectual disabilities and autism. MOCD has also prepared a series of guidelines for families and caregivers on how to safeguard against COVID-19 during the period of home isolation. These guidelines include, for example, a home examination guide for people of determination and the "Rest Assured" guide for psychiatric aids. These campaigns were carried out based on an MOCD study of 1,800 people of determination and their guardians to identify their needs and the challenges they face in light of COVID-19.

Modern sports equipment has been distributed to people of determination and the elderly in cooperation with the General Authority of Sports to widen access to community sports, promote sportsmanship, and encourage exercise and fitness to improve their lifestyle.

► **Protection of Inmates in Penal Institutions**

The High Commissioner for Human Rights stressed through its statements and guidelines addressed to all countries the need to take urgent measures to protect those in Penal institutions from COVID-19. The OHCHR also called for a reduction in the number of prisoners and confirmed the need to adhere to the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the

Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules). The OHCHR stressed the right of inmates to meet with their lawyers and communicate with family members via videoconferencing technology.

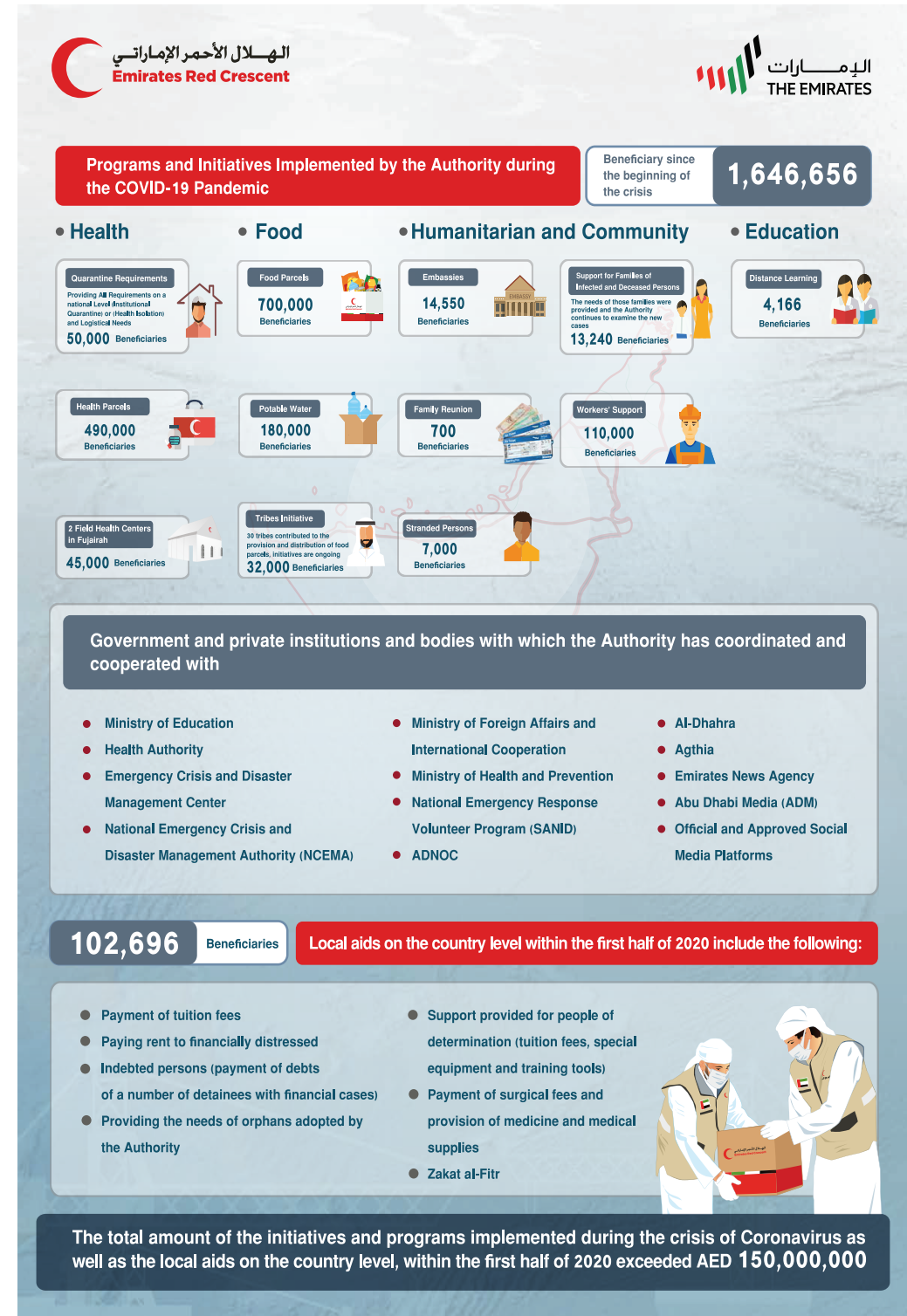
Since the outbreak of the pandemic, the UAE has recognized the risks that the virus may pose to detainees and inmates. Therefore, the UAE has taken many precautionary and preventive measures, including but not limited to the systematic sterilization of Penal institutions, the installation of thermal detectors, and the establishment of safe quarantine facilities for infected

individuals. Supplies distributed in these facilities have included hand sanitizers and masks. Inmates and staff have been tested and examined, and social distancing has been enforced. Awareness campaigns have targeted inmates and staff in different languages. Video conferencing technology has facilitated communication between medical specialists and inmates. This technology has also allowed inmates to make voice and video calls to their relatives. The UAE also released 3,534 inmates in correctional and Penal institutions by the holy month of Ramadan.

The Role of Civil Society Organizations in combating COVID - 19

Authorities, foundations, charities, and civil society organizations have played an important role in efforts to combat COVID-19, including:

- 1- The Emirates Red Crescent Authority (ERC), launched the "Among your Family" initiative to sponsor the families of those who have died because of COVID-19.
- 2- The Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation for Humanitarian Work provided laptop devices worth AED 3 million to students in cooperation with the Department of Education and Knowledge in Abu Dhabi, the Ministry of Education, and higher education institutions in the UAE.
- 3- Dubai Cares, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, launched a two-week campaign to provide 40,000 students with the tools they needed to participate in distance learning.
- 4- In another philanthropic gesture, Dar Al Ber Society announced an AED 19 million donation, including AED 7million to support the health sector and an AED 12 million donation by an Emirati family business group to provide ambulances and medical equipment to the Dubai Corporation for Ambulance Services.
- 5- The Emirates Bar Association's Waqf Lawyers team launched a hotline to provide free legal advice to frontline medical professionals, with 100 lawyers participating in the program.



Achievements and Best Practices in Combating COVID-19:

In May 2020, QuantLase Imaging Labin the UAE announced that it developed novel equipment to facilitate faster mass screening, with test results available in seconds.

In May 2020, the UAE announced its success in developing an aerosol medication that has shown promising results in the treatment of COVID-19 by stem cells. This treatment involves extracting stem cells from the patient's blood and re-introducing them after being activated. The medication has proven successful in many COVID-19 cases, particularly acute ones.

The UAE equipped the Emirates Humanitarian City complex in Abu Dhabi to receive foreign nationals from China. The UAE announced the establishment of the preventative health center in less than 48 hours, a complete city ready to receive nationals of friendly countries to ensure their safety and conduct the necessary medical examinations before their return home.

The Islamic Affairs and Charitable Activ-

ities Department in Dubai launched the Community Solidarity Fund against COVID-19 in coordination with relevant government entities, associations, charitable foundations, and community members. The process is conducted by coordinating with the Command and Control Centre for Combating COVID-19 to help support treatment requirements, medical supplies, and any other needs.

The Dubai Government Excellence Program (DGEP) launched an accelerated benchmarking initiative called "Dubai We Learn – Conquering COVID-19" to provide best practices and ideas to Dubai Executive Council's Supreme Committee of Crisis and Disaster Management with the aim of Dubai serving as a model of management of the COVID-19 pandemic. The benchmarking project is based on five overarching themes covering global best practices, including crisis management; health-care management, food security and supply chains, economy, and societal behavior.

Capacity-building

The UAE has placed the utmost importance on the issue of training and capacity building in the areas of health, social, law enforcement, awareness and education:

The Shaikha Fatima Volunteering Program launched a community and specialized health-volunteering license to support the UAE medical community. The license trains volunteers in community health to support medical teams in fighting COVID-19.

In April 2020, the Ministry of the Interior implemented a remote training course in partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on preventing and controlling infectious diseases, including the COVID-19 virus, for workers in relation to punitive and correctional institutions, juvenile care, health service providers, and human rights. The course aimed to enhance awareness of international health standards and the latest developments in global guidelines and requirements in the promotion of healthcare and human rights and the best ways to protect workers.

The Qudorat program was launched as the first remote training program in the Arab world for doctors to combat

COVID-19 in the government and private medical sectors locally and internationally. The program came following the success of the first phase of training 100 doctors and field doctors from various governmental and private institutions in the disciplines of emergency response in accordance with a locally and internationally accredited approach and by collaborating with international training institutions.

The College of Medicine and Health Sciences at the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU) announced the launch of a special training program for volunteers to support medical teams. The program has been carried out in collaboration with the Emirates Foundation for Youth Development, and it will provide an intensive workshop at the headquarters of the Center for Simulation and Medical Training at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences for 3 hours, with a capacity of 36 volunteers per session.

Partnerships and International Cooperation in Combating COVID-19:

The UAE has been keen to continue to strengthen solidarity, international cooperation, and rapid response capabilities to the various challenges facing the international community. Humanitarian action has been a fundamental pillar of the UAE's global approach to the COVID-19 pandemic. By September 2020, the UAE provided over 1,471 tons of medical supplies, including protective coveralls, surgical masks, disinfectants, lotions, gloves and masks, to 118 countries to benefit more than 1.500.000 million medical, nursing, and technical staff.

As part of the UAE's outstanding partnerships and ongoing efforts to strengthen cooperation with regional and international specialized organizations, the UAE has provided the Arab League, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Labor Organization, the World Health Organization, and the European Union with official notes detailing the efforts and measures taken in the fight against COVID-19.

The General Secretariat of the Interna-



tional Security Alliance (ISA), hosted by the UAE Ministry of Interior, organized a virtual panel discussion via videoconferencing, to discuss best practices in combating online sexual exploitation against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic by identifying victims, arresting perpetrators, and shuttering illegal websites. The process will continue until early September 2020 with the participation of experts from International Security Alliance member states and a number of officers at the UAE Ministry of Interior. The alliance, launched in Abu Dhabi in 2017, brings together nine countries: the UAE, France, Italy, Bahrain, Morocco, Spain, Senegal, Singapore, and Slovakia.

In May 2020, the UAE Food Security

Office and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations joined efforts to strengthen food security in the UAE by aiming to better equip the agricultural sector to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals objective of "zero hunger" by ensuring that everyone has access to safe, sufficient, and nutritious food at all times -especially during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

The UAE announced a \$10 million contribution to the World Health Organization to test approximately 500,000 people for COVID-19. The donation came in collaboration with Group42, one of the UAE's leading artificial intelligence and cloud computing companies, and the Chinese genome sequencing giant BGI.

Challenges, Priorities and Future Aspirations:

The spread of COVID-19 has challenged the UAE, like most countries, due to lack of adherence among some individuals to precautionary and preventive measures, as well as quarantine, home isolation, and social distancing. These violations have caused the transmission of the virus to others and resulted in the increase of cases in contact with infected patients.

It is also necessary to address the psychological and social repercussions of the pandemic and work to rehabilitate those

affected while managing economic challenges.

From May 10-12, 2020, the UAE Government held a series of remote meetings on preparations for the post-COVID-19 period with the participation of officials from more than 100 federal and local government agencies, as well as many other global experts, researchers, and strategic planners in various fields. The aim of the meeting was to develop the government's work system and formulate the UAE's

post-COVID-19 strategy by developing action plans, policies, and mechanisms, covering the most pressing economic, community, and social issues in the near future and developing future approaches to economic and development prospects.

The series of meetings focused on six key sectors, including health, economy, food security, education, community, and the government. The UAE

is currently working within the framework of the National Human Rights Committee, established in October 2019, to prepare the National Human Rights Plan. It aims to serve as a comprehensive and integrated national framework for human rights in the country to promote and protect human rights in accordance with international standards.



Conclusion

The UAE will continue its efforts to promote and protect human rights at the national level, which is the path the UAE continues to pursue even under of the outbreak of the novel coronavirus COVID - 19 pandemic. The UAE is keen to strengthen cooperation with various countries, specialized international organizations, and human rights agencies and mechanisms to ensure a decent life for its citizens and residents.

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